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A NEW ENLIGHTENMENT ?

TO speak, these days, of the hope of "Enlightenment" may seem daring and oblivious of certain major tendencies of the time, yet when we look at other, more encouraging tendencies, and consider the meaning of "Enlightenment," as applied to a past epoch of European history, the proposal takes on enough .likelihood to make it well worth examining.

"Dare to use your own understanding!" This, Immanuel Kant declared, was the "motto of Enlightenment." Enlightenment, he said, means overcoming "the incapacity of using one's understanding without the direction of another." This principle penetrated every phase of the intellectual and moral life of Europe during the period known as the Enlightenment. It gave birth to the spirit of modern science. It was the foundation of the speculations of Descartes, Leibniz, and Newton. It inspired Voltaire and Rousseau. Even religious thought underwent profound changes through the new spirit of self-reliance. The effort to "emancipate ethics from the despotism of religious metaphysics" flowered as early as 1601, in the statement of Pierre Charron (*De La Sagesse*): "I consider the words: 'Were I not a Christian, were there no God and no eternal damnation to be feared, I should do this or that,' as disgusting and terrible. I demand that you be honest because nature and reason,—that is, God—demand it, because the general order and constitution of the world, of which you are a part, require it—an order against which you cannot rebel without denying your own being and without fighting against your own purpose; as to the rest, may there come what will."

Thus the Enlightenment, whatever it became, started out as a movement devoted to moral and intellectual integrity. If, in time, it developed into the antagonist of metaphysics, it began by opposing the *despotism* of *religious* metaphysics. If its momentum led finally to dogmatic naturalism, or what we sometimes call Materialism, its original article of faith was the dignity of man and the capacity of the human mind to meet all the questions and problems presented by experience.

The importance of the Enlightenment lies in its beginnings—in the courage displayed by its leaders and the freedom they exercised in thought. For generations they moved in small minorities, meeting attack from representatives of orthodox opinion, often suffering ostracism, and sometimes persecution. Then, somewhere along in the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment began to assume the proportions of a popular party. Its ideas were incorporated in the revolutionary programs of insurgent France and restless America. By the nineteenth century, these ideas had become virtually the intellectual weapons of a new orthodoxy, and by the twentieth century, the "beliefs" of the inheritors of the Enlightenment were almost as ingrained in conventional opinion as had been the religious conceptions of the Middle Ages.

The "new orthodoxy" reached its greatest heights of dogmatic self-assurance somewhere between 1920 and 1935. Supremely contemptuous of any but mechanistic interpretations of human behavior, what passed for a continuation of logic of the Enlightenment, but was really its *reductio ad absurdum*, dominated modern psychology in the doctrines of John B. Watson, founder of the Behaviorist School. Prof. Watson refused even to use the term "consciousness" in his discussions of psychology. As an academic wit of that day remarked, "Psychology long ago lost its soul, and may now be said to be losing its mind!" The temper of this influence is indicated by a passage from L. L. Bernard's *Fields and Methods of*

Sociology (*1934*), in which the author grandly declares:

> More and more the attempt to reduce behavior to physicochemical and psycho-physical processes has been successful. . . . The old theological assumption of control through spirit direction, which later developed into a theory of spirit possession, and thence into a theory of an individual or personal soul (a personal indwelling directive spirit), has given way, under the influence of an analysis of neurons, cortexes, and endocrines, to the behavioristic theory of the conditioned response and stimulus-response or behavior patterns. The spiritualists and the theologians and the metaphysicians have not welcomed this growth of a science of personality. . .

Statements of this sort represent the high noon of anti-metaphysical arrogance, repeated, *ad nauseam*, with varying degrees of good and bad manners over a period of some twenty or thirty years. They are matched in philosophy by such gloomy versions of the meaninglessness of both life and cosmos as may be found in abundance in John Herman Randall's *Making of the Modern Mind* (Chap. 21). The mood of these utterances is sufficiently conveyed by the conservative skeptic, Lord Balfour, who declares the origin of man to have been an accident of unknown causes, his story a transitory episode on the meanest of planets, and that "from such beginnings, famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved, after infinite travail, a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligence enough to know that it is insignificant." Nor, he adds, after mankind is extinct, "will anything that is be better or worse for all that the labor, genius, devotion, and suffering of man have striven through countless ages to effect."

There have been many critics of this sort of "scientific philosophy," but not many equipped with an intellectual competence to measure legitimate scientific achievement justly and then to see, beyond, the extent of presumption and failure in the name of science. This latter kind of criticism belongs very largely to the twentieth century; it is philosophical rather than moralistic or theological, and marks, we think, the beginnings of the New Enlightenment. Two principal figures among those who have established reference points for this new critical perspective are Robert M. Hutchins and Ortega y Gasset. The latter, in *Toward a Philosophy of History* (Norton, 1941), quotes from one of his early essays on the folly of what he calls "scientific Utopianism":

> It is incomprehensible that science, whose only pleasure lies in attaining to a true image of things, should nourish itself on illusions. I recall a detail whose influence on my thought was decisive. Many years ago I was reading a lecture of the physiologist Loeb on tropism. The tropism is a concept which has been invoked to describe and throw light on the law governing the elemental movements of the infusoria. The concept serves, indifferently well and with corrections and additions, to help us understand some of these phenomena. But at the close of this lecture Loeb adds: "The day will come when what we now call moral acts in man wil1 be explained simply as tropisms." Such temerity perturbed me exceedingly, for it opened my eyes to many other judgments of modern science that are guilty, if less ostentatiously, of the same error. So then, I thought, a concept like the tropism, which is scarce capable of plumbing the secret of phenomena so simple as the antics of the infusoria, may at some vague future date suffice to explain phenomena as mysterious and complex as man's ethical acts! What sense is there here? Science has to solve its problems in the present, not transport us to the Greek kalends. If its present methods are insufficient to master now the enigmas of the universe, discretion would suggest that they be replaced by some other and more effective ones. But the science *a la mode* is full of problems which are left intact because they are incompatible with its methods. As if it was the former that were under obligation to subordinate themselves to the latter, and not the other way round! Science is full of achronisms, of Greek kalends.

(For full appreciation of Ortega's remarks, it is helpful to know that, among the Romans, to speak of the Greek Kalends was a way of saying "Never!" The Romans customarily paid their debts during the Roman Calends; the Greeks, however, reckoned otherwise, so that a postponement of

payment till the Greek Kalends really meant refusal to pay altogether.)

Another critic of the matter-obsessed version of scientific knowledge who revealed full understanding of what science is about was W. Macneile Dixon, whose *Human Situation* is often quoted in these pages. There have been others, no doubt, but these three, Ortega, Hutchins, and Dixon—men of strikingly different background—may stand as pioneers of the New Enlightenment. They are, needless to say, all men of exceptional moral depth as well as intellectual ability, whose thought has ineffaceably affected the opinions of their time and has also, we think, helped to inaugurate major changes of direction in inquiry.

Of such changes, the great nineteenth-century historian, W. E. H. Lecky, once observed that "the success of any opinion depended much less upon the force of its arguments, or upon the ability of its advocates, than upon the disposition of society to receive it, and that the predisposition of society resulted from the intellectual type of the age." A little later (in the Introduction to his *History of Rationalism*), Lecky adds, concerning men of genius, that they "are commonly at once representative and creative":

> They embody and reflect the tendencies of their time, but they also frequently modify them, and their ideas become the subject or the basis of the succeeding developments. To trace in every great movement the part which belongs to the individual and the part which belongs to general causes, without exaggerating either side, is one of the most delicate tasks of the historian.

We shall not attempt this "most delicate task," but simply suggest that in the change of the predisposition of our age, such men as we have mentioned seem to have played a leading role. Among general causes may be listed a great variety of influences, one being the widespread loss of faith in the promise of science to solve all problems, to which should be added the special anxieties resulting from the scientifically-engineered destruction of modern war. Another cause of change in attitude is certainly the failure of science to provide what may be called a "popular" philosophy of life for the common man, or for even the common scientist.

Mixed in with these general causes have been a number of impressive efforts toward superphysical discovery in psychic research. Dr. William McDougall, for one, for years head of the Department of Psychology at Harvard University, and founder of the Parapsychological Laboratory at Duke University, was a scientist who gave voice to doubts concerning the scientific preconceptions of the 1930's. In the first number of the *Journal of Parapsychology* (March, 1937), published at Duke, he asked:

> What are the relations of mind and matter? Are mental processes always and everywhere intimately and utterly dependent upon material or physical organization? Do the volitions, the strivings, the desires, the joys and sorrows, the judgments and beliefs of men make any difference to the historical course of the events of our world, as the mass of men at all times have believed ? Or does the truth lie with those few philosophers and scientists who, with or without some more or less plausible theory in support of their view, confidently reject well-nigh universal beliefs, telling us that the physical is coextensive with the mental and that the powers and potentialities of mind may be defined by the laws of the physical sciences?

While Dr. McDougall refers to "a few philosophers and scientists," this hardly conveys the volume of academic opinion set against the interests which he undertook in 1937. Journals of scientific opinion and of philosophy, in those days, would no more be found guilty of discussing seriously the ideas of soul or immortality than, say, a modern politician would want to be exposed as a former pacifist or socialist. The grain of scientific thought was strictly in the opposite direction.

Today, however, the grain is changing. We do not speak only of outstanding "leaders" of thought—nor, certainly, of the would-be resuscitators of orthodox faith, such as Lecomte du Noüy—but of the yeomen in the army of thinkers who shape public opinion. Take for

example the just published volume, *Nature, Mind, and Death* (Open Court, La Salle, Illinois), eighth in the series of the Paul Carus Lectures, by C. J. Ducasse, Professor of Philosophy at Brown University. This work, a volume of 500 pages, is candidly devoted to the possibilities of immortality of the soul, with extensive preliminary attention given to method in philosophy, and to the relationship between body and mind.

While distinguished British idealists frequently figure in these pages, showing that Prof. Ducasse continues an already existing tradition, *Nature, Mind, and Death* surely blazes a new trail for academic philosophy. We shall not burden the reader with comment on the technical aspects of the work, except to say at least a sampling of the kind of reasoning a professional philosopher feels he must attempt will be instructive to any reader. In one sense, the book is mostly foundation, on which rest, in the last chapter or two, the conclusions, or rather possibilities, which seem to be closest to the heart of Prof. Ducasse and we are persuaded that, unlike some other professional philosophers we have read, Prof. Ducasse *has* a heart, and will not be ashamed to admit a somewhat personal interest in the idea of immortality.

We find reason to admire this book on several counts. First, there is a really valuable treatment of the difference between habitual, uncritically held views, and reasoned conclusions. Speaking of what he calls the logical weakness of arguments against the possibility of survival after death, Prof. Ducasse asks why these arguments seem convincing to so many people, and answers:

> This is, I believe, because they approach the question with a certain metaphysical bias. It derives from a particular initial assumption they tacitly make, namely, that *to be real is to be material;* and to be material, as we have seen, is to be some process or part of the perceptually public world.
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> Now the assumption that to be real is to be material is a useful and appropriate one for the purpose of discovering and employing the physico-physical properties of material things; and this purpose is a legitimate and very frequent one. But those persons, and most of us, do not ordinarily realize that the validity of that metaphysical assumption is strictly relative to that specific purpose; for what that assumption automatically does is to limit one's horizon to physical causes and physical effects, and thus to make the suggestion of any nonmaterial cause or effect of a material event seem incongruous—as indeed it is *under, but only under, that assumption.* Because of one's ordinary failure to realize this state of affairs, he ordinarily continues making that assumption out of habit, and it continues to rule his judgments of relevance and plausibility in matters of causation even when, as now, the purpose in view is no longer that of discovering, or employing such physico-physical properties as material things have, but is a different one, for which that assumption is no longer useful or even congruous.
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> . . . the conception of the nature of reality that proposes to define the real as the material is not the expression of an observable fact to which everyone would have to bow, but is the expression only of a certain direction of interest on the part of the persons who so define reality—of interest, namely, which they have chosen to center wholly in the material, perceptually public world. This specialized interest is of course as legitimate as any other, but it automatically ignores all the facts, commonly called facts of mind, which only introspection directly reveals. . . . Only so long as one's judgment is swayed unawares by that special interest do the logically weak arguments against the possibility of survival, which we have examined, seem strong.

Obviously, Prof. Ducasse is a meticulous thinker, and no fiery demagogue of metaphysical realms. He would lead his readers by the compulsions of reason alone, and what he sets out to do, it seems to us, he does very well. The section devoted to the incredulity of scientists in respect to psychic facts is particularly well-done, note being taken of the fact that an attitude of unreasoning denial "is more common and stronger among scientists than among laymen, for the latter, being more ignorant of the laws of nature, have less of the intellectual orthodoxy and pride which firm knowledge of some of those laws and of the manner in which these were discovered easily generates in scientists.

Prof. Ducasse quickly liberates the idea of immortality or survival from any necessary association with the God idea, remarking that if there are any "extra-human intelligences at all in the universe," it seems more likely that they are many, and of varying powers and moral qualities, than that there should be a single, all-powerful entity modelled after a child's conception of his father.

Finally, discussing "possible forms of survival," Prof. Ducasse reviews the field of beliefs, choosing as the most reasonable hypothesis that of reincarnation, or, as he names it, "transmigration." He marshals most of the familiar arguments for this theory of immortality, drawing on modern psychic research as well as upon religious tradition and Platonically inclined speculators such as John McTaggert. His final summary, presenting "a form of survival which appears possible and which, if it should be a fact, would have significance for the living," offers these propositions:

> (*a*) That in the mind of man two comprehensive constituents are to be discerned—one, acquired during his lifetime and most obvious, which we have called his *personality* or the personal part of his mind; and another, less obvious but more basic, which exists in him from birth, and which for lack of a better name we have called his *individuality* or the individual part of his mind;
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> (*b*) That this part, consisting of aptitudes, instincts, and other innate dispositions or tendencies, is the product gradually distilled from the actions, experiences, and strivings of the diverse personalities which developed by union of it with bodies of a succession of earlier lives on earth (or possibly elsewhere);
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> (c) That, between any two such successive lives, there is an interval during which some parts of the personality of the preceding life persist—consciousness then being more or less dream-like, . . .
>
> (*d*) That some time during the interval is occupied by more or less complete recollection of the acts and events of the preceding life, and of their discernible consequences; and that dispositions of various apposite sorts are generated there by, in some such automatic way as that in which, during life, deep changes of attitude are sometimes generated in us by our reading or seeing and hearing performed a tragedy or other impressive drama, or indeed by witnessing highly dramatic real events;
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> (*e*) That, partly because the specific nature of a man's individuality automatically shapes to some extent the external circumstances as well as the nature of the personality he develops from a given birth, and perhaps partly also because what his individuality has become may determine automatically—through some such affinity as McTaggert suggests—where and when and from whom he will be reborn, justice is immanent in the entire process, though not necessarily in the primitive form of *lex talionis.*

Thus we have here a cautious, but nonetheless categorical metaphysical affirmation, concerned with the reality of immaterial things, such as mind, and a carefully thought-out scheme of human destiny—not original, perhaps, yet bearing the impress of original thinking. While some may wish, with the reviewer in the *Journal of Parapsychology,* that Prof. Ducasse had stopped with his arguments for the reality of a disembodied state, and left the problems of *re*-embodiment to a time more advanced in knowledge, there seems little doubt that thinking of this sort—disciplined, qualified, but imaginatively free—marks the presence among us of a new intellectual temper. It is not too much, we think, to speak of it, as evidence of the early dawn, at least, of a New Enlightenment.

Letter from **THE PAST**

HEROIC deeds are not required to effect great and momentous changes in human life. It is not necessary to have millions of armed men, or new railroads, or new machinery, or new expositions, labor unions, revolutions, barricades, dynamite outrages, or air-ships, and the like; nothing is required for the purpose but a transformation of public opinion. In order to bring about this transformation, no new efforts of thought are required, it is not necessary to overthrow the existing order and to invent something new and extraordinary. All we have to do is to resolve not to submit to the false, to the dead public opinion of the past, which is artificially kept alive by the governments. It is only required that every man should say what he really thinks and feels, or else abstain from saying what he does not really believe in.

If only a small group of men were to act in this manner, then the old public opinion would disappear and we should have the new, the living, and real public opinion in its stead. With the change in public opinion would follow easily the transformation in the inner life of men. It is shameful to think how really little is required for men's deliverance from oppressing evils: they must only not lie. Let men not submit to the lies that are suggested to them, let them say only what they think and feel, and then there will come such a change in our life as revolutionists would not be able to bring about in the course of centuries, even if they had the power.

A free man may utter truthfully what he thinks and what he feels in the midst of thousands of men who by their actions and doings show something quite the opposite. It would seem that the truthful man must stand alone, yet it happens that the majority also think and feel the same, only that they do not express it. What was yesterday a new opinion of one man, to-day is the joint opinion of the majority. As soon as that opinion establishes itself, men's actions commence to change slowly, and by degrees.

—LEO TOLSTOI, *Christianity and Patriotism*

REVIEW
THE PUBLIC INQUISITION

IRWIN SHAW'S latest novel, *The Troubled Air* (Random House and Signet, 1952), may be regarded as an extremely valuable book, certainly outranking his better known *Young Lions.* The *Lions,* although filled with insights into the psychological accompaniments of modern war, was nonetheless packed with the clichés of the contemporary novel, while *The Troubled Air* hardly touches the theme of amorous adventures and has nothing of battlefield mutilation, being simply an absorbing study of typical patterns of reaction to anti-Communist hysteria. Moreover, the hero, Archer, is unspectacular. He is the balding director of a top radio show, a former small-college professor, and a devoted family man, who had, previously to the unfolding of the plot, shown no concern in politics.

When a witch-hunting scandal sheet claims that five of Archer's best artists are "Reds," both the sponsor and the agency for which Archer works demand they be fired. At this point the unobtrusive director develops both a backbone and a passion for justice. He threatens to resign unless given two weeks for personal investigation of the unsubstantiated charges, subsequently devoting his time and his money to help the unfortunates who, he finds, have virtually doomed themselves through past affiliation with some organization or other now on the Attorney General's list.

In the process of his attempted defense of the five, Archer is destroyed, both socially and financially, but he does become quite a man. When, after consultation with one of the accused, a composer who is about to be deported, he fires this artist in an attempt to save the others, he is labelled "fascist" in the Left Wing press, and a "hatchet man for the reactionaries." Meanwhile his association with the bedraggled composer and his attempt to defend the right of the other suspected artists both to their own opinions and to an impartial investigation earn him a "Communist" label in other circles. Anonymous threatening phone calls invade his home, his telephone wire is tapped by a private detective agency employed by an anti-Communist fanatic, and pressure is brought to bear to cause his dismissal and blacklisting in radio.

All of this because of a single, libelous magazine article. When Archer first read the article, he felt no extreme reactions, little realizing what violence could be evoked through the power of accusation in the year 1950:

> The article was written in the aggrieved prophetic style with which people air their views on Communism in the newspapers: There were some pugnacious metaphoric generalities about the necessity of clearing the American air of the termites who inveigled their way into the middle of the American home. It offered some twenty organizations on the Attorney-General's list in which the actors were alleged to hold membership, lumping them all together and making it sound as though all the people who were accused were equally culpable. The article closed with a blunt hint that if the sponsors of the program did not take action, appropriate steps would be instituted by the American people.
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> Archer sighed when he finished the article. Except for the names, it was so familiar, and by now, so boring. He was always surprised at the freshness and vigor with which the crusaders of the press could stir up the old names and the old charges. Even if a man felt that they were true and he was serving his country nobly by repeating them, it took a special imperviousness to boredom to roar them over and over again like that. Power, he glimpsed dimly, is finally in the hands of those who find a geometrically increasing pleasure in repetition. The equivalent among saints would be a man who merely said, "God, God, God," ten thousand times a day. I am probably a weakling, he thought, because I demand novelty.

When Archer protests to his agency employer, Hutt, against the blanket indictment of the artists, he is met with the following argument—an argument which finally clinches his growing determination to fight:

> "Once again," Hutt said, "let me go back to the premise that you keep avoiding. The premise that we

are at war. In a war, actions are approximate, not individual. When we dropped bombs on Berlin, we did not carefully pick out SS colonels and members of the Nazi diplomatic corps as our targets. We dropped them on Germans, because Germans were, in general, our enemies. We never managed to kill Hitler, did we, although we killed thousands and thousands of women, children, and old men who were, I suppose, by peaceful standards, quite innocent. Become modern," Hutt said cheerfully. "Learn to be approximate."

"That's a disease," Archer said, "I prefer not to be infected."

"Perhaps you're right," said Hutt. "But remember that it's a disease that the Communists started. Not us."

"I'm also opposed to the theory," Archer said, "that one must always embrace the enemy's sickness."

Hutt chuckled, indulging his lieutenant. "Perhaps," he said gently to Archer, "perhaps we may have to resign ourselves to an unhappy fact. Perhaps we live in a time in which there are no correct solutions to any problem. Perhaps every act we make must turn out to be wrong. You might find some comfort in that, Archer. I do. If you're resigned in advance to knowing that you can't act correctly, no matter what you do, maybe you will be relieved of some of the burden of responsibility."

"I have not yet reached that austere height," Archer said.

The Boss tries in every way to frighten Archer from defending anyone who is publicly accused, regardless of the possibility of his innocence:

"Be careful. Don't be hasty," Hutt said earnestly. "Don't expose yourself. Don't be quixotic, because the world doesn't laugh at Quixote any more; it beheads him. Be discreet in your methods and in your choice of friends whom you wish to defend. Don't depend too much upon reason, because you are being judged by the crowd—and the crowd judges emotionally, not reasonably, and there is no appeal from an emotional conviction. Avoid the vanguard because you will attract attention up front, and it is hard to survive attention these days.

"If you become known as a partisan of an unpopular group—for whatever innocent reasons—you must expect to have the searchlight put on you. Your reasons will be investigated—everything about you will be investigated. People you've forgotten for ten years will come up with damaging misquotations, memories, doubtful documents. Your private life will be scrutinized, your foibles will be presented as sins your errors as crimes. Archer, listen to me. . . . " Hutt's voice sank even lower and it was hard for Archer to hear him even though he was standing next to him. "Nobody can stand investigation. Nobody. If you think you can you must have led your life in deep freeze for the last twenty years. If there were a saint alive today, two private detectives and a newspaper columnist could damn him to hell if they wanted to, in the space of a month."

Gradually Archer comes to realize the extent to which all America has been overtaken by a miasma of suspicion and hatred. He sees that no possible domination by a hostile foreign power could ever need stronger resistance than the vicious trends now manifesting in his own city and professional field. The people with money and position are afraid to defend anyone because they are more interested in defending their twenty thousand dollars a year; yet, being intelligent, they often suffer from a self-loathing which drags them into slums of moral poverty.

One of the best passages in this book is, we think, a description of an urban scene which somehow symbolizes the curious admixture of viciousness and näiveté involved in subservience to the voices of mass hatred:

At Fourth Street, Archer got out. People were buying candy and flowers and long loaves of French bread. Across the street, in front of the women's prison, a police van was unloading a batch of prostitutes. Everything was normal on Sixth Avenue, now called the Avenue of the Americas, although a report had just come out in which it was stated that several of the countries for which the avenue had been named were plotting invasion of several other good neighbors. A thin tree, which had been planted in the concrete by Mayor LaGuardia, since dead, waited for spring among the cold gasoline fumes, its buds closed and secret and admitting nothing. The heads of families bought newspapers on the corners, folding them under their arms, dutifully taking the poison home to be distributed equitably among the generations.

The first half of *The Troubled Air* seems excellent—nothing overdone or underdone, with a consistent relief of amusing humor. In the latter half, the author seems to become a little hysterical himself, while writing about hysteria. Finally, everything goes wrong for the hero, who finds that he is betrayed by his best friend (who improbably turns out to be an active Communist), and by others whom he has tried to help; his domestic life is nearly ruined and he becomes an object of flooding hate, focussed from many divergent and sometimes opposite directions. Nevertheless, the lesson Shaw has in mind is a good one. Such things *can* happen to any outspoken man who attempts to secure a fair hearing for the victims of the witch-hunt.

It seems doubtful, however, that so much super-tragedy was needed in the closing chapters to make this clear, and there is danger that the essential message of the book will be obscured for some readers by this defect. It is our opinion that Shaw needed only 250 pages to do the job; but for 250 pages *The Troubled Air* comprises the best fictional counterpart to Owen Lattimore's *Ordeal by Slander* that we have yet seen.

COMMENTARY
CONCERNING IMMORTALITY

IT is a matter of some interest that a very early representative of the Enlightenment in Europe—Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525)—was also the first serious opponent of the idea of survival of death. He wrote a carefully reasoned book (*De Immortalitate Animae, 1516*) denying the possibility of immortality and denying even the more generalized survival as a part of the common human essence, supposed to have been taught by the Arabian philosopher, Averroes.

What qualifies Pomponazzi as a forerunner of the Enlightenment, however, is not the opinions he held, but the way he reached them; not his conclusions, but the spirit in which he justified them.

Pomponazzi was obviously a critic of conventional religious ideas, and his theory of human mortality was conceived with greater moral dignity than the orthodox doctrine of survival. True good, he held, can not be purchased. The best moral life is that pursued for its own sake, without hope of reward and without fear of future punishment. He willingly admits that there are seeming inequities in the good and evil experienced by men, but, he argues, these are but superficial, since nothing better than goodness itself can possibly reward a man's virtue, and since the evil man suffers the greatest punishment through his own self-deprivation. These rewards and punishments are immediate and unavoidable, so that the idea of a future life may be dispensed with, so far as the requirements of moral justice are concerned.

As regards the claim that a single life gives but small opportunity for human fulfillment, Pomponazzi replies that every man is capable of moral action appropriate to his understanding. This, he says, is the end of life, within the reach of all. And while men may differ widely in skills of various sorts, they are equal in possessing moral perception. "For the universe," he argues, "would be completely preserved if all men were zealous and highly moral, but not if they were all philosophers or smiths or builders." The moral law, for Pomponazzi, is thus the one universal rule in human life. It is a suggestive commentary on the prevailing theories of immortality in his time, that, in order to defend this proposition, Pomponazzi felt obliged to argue against the soul's survival.

Today, it seems to us, immortality may be defended for much the same reasons as those which prompted Pomponazzi's attack, if only because this attack on conventional morality, begun more than four hundred years ago, accomplished so sweeping a victory.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WHEN a child tells a parent or relative, "I don't like you," this, to be sure, may be hard on the adult, but we are more concerned here with how difficult the relationship must sometimes have seemed to the child for such a remark to be elicited.

Though few parents like to admit it, many have been "attacked" in this fashion. Usually the matter is put out of mind, or else attempts are made to condition the child to repress even momentary impulses to say such a thing; but while both these reactions are understandable enough, they can be enormously improved upon. The important thing is not to frighten or cajole the child to stop making ingenuous admissions of hostility, but to find out why he makes them.

These attitudes in children seem to occur most frequently when the parents, grandparents, or other relatives have allowed themselves to become too dotingly attached to the child. Such adults are usually possessive in all the conventional ways, and whether or not they are possessive overtly, the child seems to feel this excessive preoccupation with his small self; he may feel enveloped, almost smothered, by a hidden and perhaps entirely unwitting constancy of emotional surveillance. It is our belief that when a parent or other adult allows himself to become emotionally dependent upon a child, thinking of him almost exclusively, planning for him and enjoying his companionship more than anything else in the world, the child is bound to react negatively after a time. For one thing, he may feel that too much is being asked of him. He knows that the adult will be hurt and disappointed many times at his undisciplined or selfish behavior, and, without a conscious marshalling of thoughts, probably feels that for anyone to saddle him with so demanding a relationship is extremely unfair.

Actually, a mother has to *discover* that the child and herself are two distinct individualities. Psychologists have noted how commonly adults attempt to identify themselves with their young—or to wish the young to identify with them. Either way, the child feels an invasion of the "inviolable right" of his independence. If he thereupon announces a "hate" or a dislike for the parent, *what he is really disliking is the invasion;* conversely, the mother need have no morbid imaginings about some hidden curse lying upon the soul of either her child or herself, but should seek the root of the trouble in interlocking and subtly conflicting feelings.

A recent article, "An Experimental Approach to Mental Health" (*Mental Hygiene*, July, 1952), based on studies in a children's hospital, contains some interesting observations along these lines:

> Rarely does a mother recognize from the first that the difficulty lies in the relation *between* her and her child; she is more likely to feel that she is all to blame, or that it is the child who is all to blame. Either position assumes greater responsibility for each than the relationship carries. More over, there may be the hidden idea that the child is either a monster or a *tabala rasa* with no identity of his own. To discover that there are two individuals concerned, each with his own needs and desires, each contributing his share to the relation between them, is often in and of itself a corrective experience which resolves the problem that the mother brought to the center. One often hears the saying, "You learn on your first child." *What* does one learn, is the question. While some mothers learn for the first time what children are like, for others there is the reawakening of their own childhood conflicts and an attempt in adulthood, through their children, to resolve their own early conflicts. This often accounts for the extensive over-identification of the "problem child" with his mother and her inability to allow him to develop his own identity.

The authors of this article hold respected positions in a child development center, one as chief psychologist and the other as research analyst. They note how often child-parent relationships are improved by inviting the parents to watch activities in the clinic nursery school. When parents tend to feel that their particular child is either uniquely "bad" or "good," exposure

to the impersonal approach of the clinic may be an excellent antidote:

> The use of the nursery school for observation both of their own children and of others has been found invaluable for some mothers. Sharing the experience with a parent consultant or nursery-school teacher in the informal, friendly atmosphere seems to give perspective, reducing anxiety and guilt. To see how play is fostered through the use of simple materials and equipment, to see the meaning of that play for the child in developing initiative, confidence, and experimentation, encourages a mother to find ways of providing similar opportunities for the child at home and even to find pleasure for herself in playing with him. Noting the ways in which the teachers guide the children, how they handle behavior that has been a mother's despair, may at first provoke feelings of inadequacy and self-deprecation in some mothers. However, for most it arouses interest, questions, and a revaluation of their own situations. They begin to see their children as individuals in their own right.

It seems safe to say, then, that any sign of a childish anxiety or hostility complex means that we may shortly unearth its progenitor in an adult, and, usually with young children, the source will not lie in some deeply buried past event, but in the child's immediate daily environment. Over-possessiveness will fertilize almost any capacity for emotional distress, for the child is striving, with all his growing powers, to free himself of complete identification with adults, while unwise adults may be attempting to perpetuate that very primitive bond.

None of the foregoing is meant to imply that parents should spend less time with their children, leaving them entirely "free." Often a child needs help in developing normal companionships with other children. As the *Mental Hygiene* writers observe:

> It may be that a child is so distrustful, so unsure of himself, that he must find himself with a trustworthy adult before he can meet his fellows even in a limited way. Such children are offered individual play sessions with a teacher, or the psychologist, until the time when they can sustain and utilize group experience.

The article also speaks of the value in parents learning how to play with their children: "The children who come to the center (in need of psychological help) are distinguished for their limited or actual lack of ability to play. For many reasons they have not had the usual amount of healthy and motor experience." But in the playing, the adult needs to learn how to enjoy the play at the child's level, and avoid the much more complicated criteria in respect to what constitutes "worth-while" enjoyment.

As a British psychologist, remarkably successful in the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents, often noted, the worst pressure upon the child is *psychological* pressure, and the worst punishment is prolonged *psychological* punishment. The child often doesn't understand what we require of him, but if he feels that he is being tried and found wanting, or if he feels that he is never left alone to discover himself for himself, he certainly will many times "not like" the parent or teacher.

FRONTIERS

Modes of Education

A RELEASE by Jaime Torres Bodet, Director of Unesco, devoted to the educational activities of that organization, recalls the distinction made in MANAS of two weeks ago between organizational activities and education. The point was that organization may facilitate education, but it cannot accomplish it.

Unesco probably represents the most obviously constructive phase of the various undertakings of the United Nations. The quality of Unesco leadership has been notable, and the generalized statement of its purposes by Mr. Bodet in this release can excite nothing but admiration. When he says that "the best political relations between governments cannot ensure peace if many human beings are hungry, ill, unemployed; if they live in fear and the evils that attend it—intolerance, suspicion, hatred; above all, if they live in ignorance"—what can anyone do but heartily approve ?

One Unesco project discussed by Mr. Bodet is called "fundamental education," through which an effort is being made to encourage international travel of manual and non-manual workers to study methods of education in other countries. "They are learning how to teach other teachers, and how to prepare appropriate teaching materials." The object is both simple and essential: ". . . to teach reading and writing as an integral part of learning how to fight disease, hunger, and all the other evils that prevent so many men from using modern means to get a modern way of life." The importance of the project Mr. Bodet puts this way:

> . . . how can we create a truly democratic international spirit or a truly international democracy when more than half the human beings on earth cannot read their own laws and, hence, lack the means of recognizing the concrete responsibilities of freedom? The illiteracy of these hundreds of millions of men and women not only prevents them from becoming world citizens. It also—and more immediately—makes them prisoners of disease, misery and despair.

Here is a sort of recognition of the world's problems which, were it more widespread, would lead to vast allocations of funds to Unesco, to help in this vitally necessary work; or, what is perhaps more likely, if there were such recognition, today, it would make educational efforts by Unesco quite superfluous for the reason that individual countries and private groups would long since have devoted both great wealth and great energy to meet these needs. Unesco, however, has only a budget of $8,700,000 a year—a sum which probably would not make even a down payment on an up-to-date aircraft carrier.

So the good causes—even the organizational ones—are starved while the big money is devoted elsewhere.

Let us note, however, that Unesco can hardly do more than supply the "tools" of education. Tools are important, of course; but, placing first things first, it is the content of education in which we are most interested. Elsewhere, in MANAS for Oct. 8, the "swift, immediate insight of a single human being" was spoken of. What seems of the greatest importance is that education embodying this kind of vision never be lost sight of, through an exaggerated emphasis on the organizational approach and necessities. An organization can always go stale and mediocre, but never the simple record of individual understanding. We have in mind, here, a passage from a recent novel on South Africa—*The Path of Thunder,* by Peter Abrahams (Harper, 1948). While only a "story," this book contains a kind of wisdom concerning the problems of "international democracy" that no organization can ever be expected to secrete. The scene of this passage is a tiny shop in a South African village. Present are young Finkelberg, son of the shopkeeper, an intellectual Jew; Lanny, a young "colored" man (of mixed heredity—white and African), who had just returned to his home village to become its

school teacher after his education in Johannesburg; and Mako, a fullblooded African from the nearby compound. These three meet several times to talk together, making the only occasions in the story when its action emerges into the air of freedom. The reason is plain in what follows:

> Lanny looked at Mako and chose his words carefully:
>
> "You said earlier that the coloreds were living between two fires and that they tried to escape by grading upward."
>
> "Yes."
>
> "You sounded as though you disapproved. Why?"
>
> "Yes," Isaac broke in, 'are you against mixed marriages ?"
>
> Mako sucked at his pipe and thought. Then he spoke:
>
> "I do not object to the coloreds grading upward, or trying to, because it is toward the whites. I do so because it shows the way in which he is not free. What I mean is this: if the whites and the black people were equal, if there were no color bar, if a black man could go to Parliament and had all the same rights as a white man, and the colored people wanted to grade toward the whites, then it would be all right. I would not object. Now they try to grade toward the white man because he has power. They accept the inferior position and try to escape it by trying to become white themselves. You see, it is a slavery of the mind and that is even worse than the slavery of the body. It is like us black people trying to make our hair straight because the white man has straight hair. It is the internal unfreedom, the acceptance of the slave state and trying to graduate from it that I am against. You see? It is the same about mixed marriage. If it is compensation for not being white then I will fight it with all my strength. If it is the business of a man and a woman who love and have stepped above and beyond color then it is their business. And there is this too, Finkelberg. Among educated Africans and other non-Europeans in this country you will find a movement away from our own past. It is natural. We are ruled by foreigners who are white. They control our education. We have to learn and assimilate many of their ways to survive. It is not strange, then, to find the English graduate and the African graduate having much in common. . . .

The content of genuine education is always a seeking out of motives, and here "mere" literacy counts for very little. It might even be argued that literacy can do no more than set the material and perhaps cultural level at which human beings either fail or succeed to achieve moral excellence. Since literacy seems one of the conditions involved in coping with the massive problems of the twentieth century—needed, as Mako says, in order "to survive"—it must of course be sought, and assiduously; but let us not mistake the gifts of reading and writing for the gifts of thinking and understanding and the gift of hungering after wisdom and the good. The men the free world has most feared as "evil" in recent years have not been "illiterate."